

(I)



AN ACT FOR PUNISHING

Of such Persons as live at

HIGH RATES,

And have no visible Estate, Profession or Calling
Answerable thereunto.

At the Parliament begun at *Westminster* the 17th Day
of *September*, *Anno Domini* 1656.



Whereas divers lewd and dissolute Persons in this Commonwealth, live at very high Rates and great Expences, having no visible Estate, Profession, or Calling (answerable thereunto) to maintain themselves in their licentious, loose and ungodly practices, do make it their Trade
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and Livelyhood, to Cheat, Deboyst, Cozen, and
Deceive the young Gentry, and other the good
People of this Commonwealth; Be it Enact-
ed by his Highness the Lord Protector and this
present Parliament, and the Authority thereof,
That all and every Justice of Peace, in any
County, and all and every Justice of Peace,
Maioꝛ, oꝛ other head Officer, in any City,
Burrough, oꝛ Town Corporate, shall, within
their respective Limits, have power and Autho-
rity, by Warrant under his oꝛ their hands and
Seals, to send for every such person oꝛ per-
sons, and to require of him oꝛ them sufficient
Sureties, aswell for his as their appearance at
the next General Sessions for the Peace, to be
held in such County, City, Burrough oꝛ
Town Corporate, as for his oꝛ their good a-
bearing; And in case such person oꝛ persons
shall refuse oꝛ neglect to finde such sufficient
Sureties, then to send such person oꝛ persons to
the Common Goal, there to remain until he oꝛ
they shall finde Sureties as aforesaid.

And be it further Enacted by the Authority
aforesaid, That at such General Sessions for
the Peace, to be held within such County, City,
Burrough, oꝛ Town Corporate as aforesaid,
such person oꝛ persons, shall be Indicted for so
living at high Rates and great Expences, ha-
ving no visible Estate, Profession, oꝛ Calling an-
swerable thereunto, upon which Indictment if
he oꝛ they shall be legally convicted of the said
Offence oꝛ Offences, then every such person
oꝛ persons shall be sent to the house of Correcti-
on, there to be punished and set on work accord-
ing to the Law, and there to continue for the
space of thre moneths; And if such person oꝛ
persons

persons shall be convicted as aforesaid a second time for the like Offence, then such person or persons, shall be committed to the house of Correction, there to be punished and set on work, and there to continue untill he or they shall be discharged by the Justices in open Sessions.

And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any person or persons, at any time after the first day of August, which shall be in the year of our Lord One thousand six hundred fifty and seven, shall (by playing at Cards, Dice, Tables, Tennis, Bowles, or Shovelboard, Cock-fighting, or by Horse-races, or any Game or Games, or by bearing any part in the Adventure, or by betting on the sides or hands of such as do or shall play as aforesaid) directly or indirectly, win or gain unto him or themselves, any sum or sums of money, or other thing valuable whatsoever, That then every person and persons, so winning or gaining as aforesaid, shall forfeit double the sum or value so won or gained, One Moety thereof to the Protector, the other Moety unto the person or persons who shall lose y^e same, so as such loser do or shall prosecute or sue for the same within three Moneths next after such Forfeiture; And in default of such prosecution, the said other Moety to such person or persons, who shall or will prosecute or sue for the same, at any time within six moneths next after the said three moneths expired.

And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the several Forfeitures in this Act before mentioned, shall or may be recovered by Action of Debt, Bill, Plaint or Information, in any of the four Courts of Record at Westminster, wherein no Essoign or Wager of
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Law shall be allowed: And that all and every such Plaintiffe or Plaintiffs, Informer or Informers, shall in every such Suit, recover his or their double Costs; Any Law or Statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that all Judgements, Statutes, Recognizances, Mortgages, Bonds, Wills, Promises, Covenants, Decrees and other Assurances and Engagements whatsoever, that any time, since the four and twentieth day of June, in the year One thousand six hundred forty seven, have been, or shall hereafter knowingly be obtained by, or otherwise Made, Given, Acknowledged, or Entred into, to any Scribe-ner or Scriveners, or to any other Person or Persons, for security, or in satisfaction of money, or other things, since the time aforesaid, Plaid for, or hereafter to be Plaid for or Lost at Cards, Dice, Tables, Tennis, Bowles, Shovel-board, or by Cock-fighting, or by Horse-races, or by any Game or Games, or by bearing any part in the Adventure, or by Betting on the sides or hands of such as Do or shall Play as aforesaid, shall be utterly void and of none effect.

London, Printed by *Henry Hills* and *Iohn Field*, Printers to His Highness the Lord
PROTECTOR, 1657.